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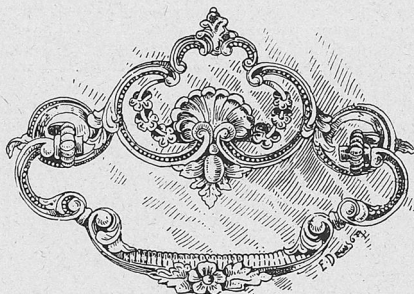
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## THE MISUSE OF ORNAMENTAL METAL WORK ON FURNITURE.

**T**HAT there is a serious misuse of ornamental metal work, such as drawer pulls, escutcheons, etc., on the various pieces of furniture they are intended to adorn, is most evident to the thoughtful reader whose knowledge of classical forms and just sense of the fitness of things makes him a critical observer in these matters. A glance through many of the large furniture stores makes this apparent, as there seems to be little continuity of thought in applying these decorations, and one often sees a Louis XVI. cabinet loaded with elaborate examples of Empire metal work. There seems no excuse for this, as the most recent trend of taste in furnishing matters has affected not only the woodworker but the craftsman in metals as well, and those who cultivate the production of hinges, handles and similar decorative adjuncts for cabinet work have of late recognized the necessity for the organization of patterns of a character somewhat different from that which has held the field so long; for the time has passed when anything will do in the way of style for such ornament.



A LOUIS XVI. DRAWER PULL. MANUFACTURED BY THE AMERICAN RING CO., WATERBURY, CONN.

The importance of the part these features referred to play in the success of our household goods has not of late years been fully appreciated, but matters are rapidly improving in that respect.

Locks, hinges and handles are absolutely essential to every well-made piece of furniture work, and, as their introduction is imperative, there is every reason why they should answer a decorative as well as a utilitarian object; and, furthermore, their fitness should be apparent by the fact that they follow closely the style adopted in the furniture itself. That the manufacturers of to-day realize the importance of this feature is evident by the fact that they are now making designs for these accessories in every known style of classical design, many fine examples of which may be seen in looking through their stock or catalogue. Here we find beautiful forms suitable for cabinets, tables and other pieces of woodwork in Empire, the Louis XVI., Rococo, Sheriton, as well as the Adams and the off-shoot of this, the Colonial forms, and so marked are the characteristic features of each style that there seems no excuse for furniture dealers in misapplying these necessary adjuncts.

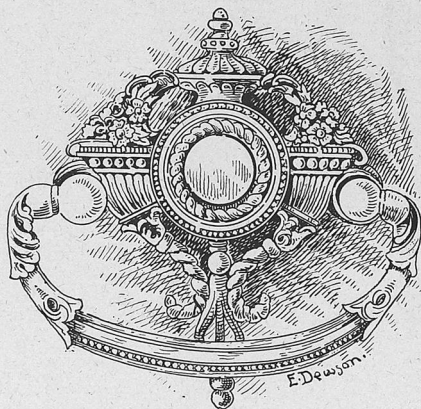
As an illustration, in some measure, of these statements and to assist our readers in keeping pace with the times, we give herewith three illustrations in good clas-

sical styles of work of the American Ring Company, Waterbury, Conn. The smaller escutcheon shown is a good example of the free rendering of Louis XVI., and may be used as well on any marked specimen of furniture in the Renaissance styles. Of the two drawer pulls one is a very daintily-designed Louis XVI. that would be an ornament to any piece of furniture in this style; the other is an excellent example of the modern Empire style, in which the classical forms have been closely adhered to. It will be seen at a glance that the characteristic features of these styles are well marked and show a thorough appreciation on the part of the manufacturer of the necessity of meeting the designer of cabinet-work more than half way, and the result is a thoroughly satisfactory production.

Of good examples we have no lack, as not a few of the finest old cupboards, chests, cabinets and other pieces of furniture can be found in our museums and also in private collections, which are treasured as much for the evidence of skill and purity of the style of metal work they bear as for any other reason; and this is a fact that may well be borne in mind by the manufacturer of this class of goods of the present day.

There is a tendency in accord with the advanced education of the public on decorative matters towards simplicity in form, and the day of overcrowding and elaboration of ornament has gone by. If forms are good in outline, the simpler they are, the better the taste displayed, and elaborate modeling and chastening are not so much looked for in the present examples as is the essential motive of pure artistic simplicity, and we do not think these productions will suffer from an artistic point of view by following this principle.

At a not far-back period the formidable obstacle which seemed to lie in the way of reforming the design of the minor arts in this country was, perhaps, the indifference with which people of reputed tastes were accustomed to regard the products of common industry. There were many *connoisseurs* in the fine arts, both decorative and architectural, haunting auctions and curiosity shops with a view of gratifying their principal hobby, who would have been surprised to have been asked their opinion upon so simple a thing as a drawer pull. But, no doubt, this state of things in the past found apology in the popular conviction that in the case of such practical appliances it was impossible to unite convenience with anything like artistic design.



AN EMPIRE DRAWER PULL. MANUFACTURED BY THE AMERICAN RING CO., WATERBURY, CONN.